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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (Current Amended) A regional message server of a communication system, said regional message server comprising:

a first connection for connecting to a first agency, wherein said first agency communicates under a first addressing scheme;

a second connection for connecting to a second agency, wherein said second agency communicates under a second addressing scheme; ~~and~~

a global directory connected to said first connection and said second connection, wherein said global directory is adapted to provide a common hierarchical addressing scheme for said first agency and said second agency and to maintain both global addresses and local addresses for said first agency and said second agency, and wherein said common hierarchical addressing scheme provides said global addresses by adding to said local addresses additional information that identifies one of said first agency and said second agency; and

a central processing unit connected to said first connection and said second connection and said global directory,

wherein said central processing unit is adapted to receive from said first agency a message having a global address for said second agency, to substitute a local address corresponding to said global address, and to transmit said message to said local address in said

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second agency. ~~add additional hierarchy to said first addressing scheme and said second~~

~~addressing scheme to provide communication between users in said first agency and users in said~~

~~second agency, without changing said first addressing scheme or said second addressing scheme.~~

2.   (Original) The regional message server in claim 1, wherein said first connection connects

to a first message switching unit in said first agency and said second connection connects to a

second message switching unit in said second agency.

3.   (Original) The regional message server in claim 1, further comprising a translator,

wherein said first agency and said second agency operate under different addressing protocols

and said translator translates between said different addressing protocols.

4.   (Currently Amended) The regional message server in claim 1, wherein said global

directory <u>further</u> maintains <u>said local</u> addresses <u>and said corresponding global addresses</u> of units

within said first agency and said second agency.

5.   (Currently Amended) The regional message server in claim 1, wherein said central

processing unit changes ~~an~~ <u>global</u> address of a <u>unit in said second agency in a</u> message received

from said first agency into a format, <u>such as a local address,</u> acceptable to said second agency and

forwards said message to said second agency.

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6.   (Currently Amended) The regional message server in claim 1, wherein said first agency

and said second agency are provided access to said global directory to obtain said global

addresses of units within said global directory.

7.   (Original) The regional message server in claim 1, wherein said central processing unit

produces a report of active units in said first agency and said second agency.

8.   (Currently Amended) A communication system comprising:

a plurality of first-level regional servers, each connected to a first agency and a second

agency; and

a second-level regional server connected to a said plurality of said first-level regional

servers, wherein each of said first-level regional servers comprises:

a first connection for connecting to said first agency, wherein said first agency

communicates under a first addressing scheme;

a second connection for connecting to said second agency, wherein said second agency

communicates under a second addressing scheme;

a global directory connected to said first connection and said second connection; wherein

said global directory is adapted to provide a common hierarchical addressing scheme for said

first agency and said second agency and to maintain both global addresses and local addresses for

said first agency and said second agency, and wherein said common hierarchical addressing

scheme provides said global addresses by adding to said local addresses additional information

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that identifies one of said first agency and said second agency; and

a central processing unit connected to said first connection and said second connection

and said global directory,

wherein said central processing unit is adapted to receive from said first agency a

message having a global address for said second agency, to substitute a local address

corresponding to said global address, and to transmit said message to said local address in said

second agency. add a regional address to said first addressing scheme and said second addressing

scheme to provide communication between users in said first agency and users in said second

agency, without changing said first addressing scheme or said second addressing scheme.

9.   (Original) The communication system in claim 8, wherein said second-level regional

server comprises:

a first connection for connecting to one first-level regional server;

a second connection for connecting to another first-level regional server;

a directory of regional servers; and

a central processing unit.

10.   (Original) The communication system in claim 9, wherein said directory of regional

servers maintains addresses of all regional servers serviced by said communication system.

11.   (Original) The communication system in claim 9, wherein said central processing unit

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forwards said message from one first-level regional server to one or more second-level regional

servers.

12.   (Currently Amended) A method of transferring messages between a first agency and a

second agency, said method comprising:

using a common hierarchical addressing scheme to provide corresponding global

addresses for local addresses in said first agency and said second agency by adding to said local

addresses additional information that identifies one of said first agency and said second agency;

transferring a message having one of a local address for said first agency and a global

address for said second agency from a sending unit in said first agency to a first message

switching unit within said first agency, wherein said first agency communicates under a first

addressing scheme;

transferring said message from said first message switching unit to a regional message

server if said message has said global address for said second agency;

substituting altering, by said regional message server, said local address corresponding to

said global an address for said second agency of said message;

transferring said message from said regional message server to a second message

switching unit in said second agency, wherein said second agency communicates under a second

addressing scheme; and

transferring said message from said second message switching unit to a destination unit in

said second agency;

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~~wherein said altering process adds additional hierarchy to said first addressing scheme~~

~~and said second addressing scheme to provide communication between users in said first agency~~

~~and users in said second agency, without changing said first addressing scheme or said second~~

~~addressing scheme.~~

13.   (Original) The method in claim 12, further comprising translating, by said regional

message server, said message from an addressing protocol used by said first agency to a protocol

used by said second agency.

14.   (Current Amended) The method in claim 12, further comprising maintaining a global

directory having said local addresses and said global addresses of units within said first agency

and said second agency.

15.   (Currently Amended) The method in claim 14, further comprising providing said first

agency and said second agency access to said global directory to obtain said global addresses of

said units within said global directory.

16.   (Original) The method in claim 12, further comprising producing a report of active units

in said first agency and said second agency.

17.   (Currently Amended) A method of transferring messages between a first agency and a

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second agency, said method comprising:

establishing a network in which said first agency and said second agency are each in communication with a corresponding one of a plurality of first-level regional message servers and in which each of said plurality of first-level regional message servers are in communication with a second-level regional message server;

using a common hierarchical addressing scheme to provide corresponding global addresses for local addresses in said first agency and said second agency by adding to said local addresses additional information that identifies one of said first agency and said second agency and said corresponding one of said first-level regional message servers;

transferring a message from a sending unit in a first agency to a first message switching unit within said first agency, wherein said first agency communicates under a first addressing scheme;

transferring said message from said first message switching unit to said corresponding first-level regional message server of said first agency, if said message has a global address that identifies said second agency and said corresponding first-level regional message server;

transferring said message from said first-level regional message server of said first agency to a second-level regional message server;

transferring said message from said second-level regional message server to a said second first-level regional message server of said second agency;

substituting altering, by said second- first-level regional message server of said second agency, said local address corresponding to said global an address of said message;

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transferring said message from said ~~second~~ <u>first-level</u> regional message server <u>of said</u>

<u>second agency</u> to a second message switching unit in said second agency, wherein said second

agency communicates under a second addressing scheme; and

transferring said message from said second message switching unit to a destination unit in

said second agency~~;~~

~~————wherein said altering process adds additional hierarchy to said first addressing scheme~~

~~and said second addressing scheme to provide communication between users in said first agency~~

~~and users in said second agency, without changing said first addressing scheme or said second~~

~~addressing scheme.~~

18.   (Original) The method in claim 17, further comprising translating, by one of said first

regional message server and said second regional message server, said message from an

addressing protocol used by said first agency to a protocol used by said second agency.

19.   (Currently Amended) The method in claim 17, further comprising maintaining a global

directory having <u>said local addresses and said global</u> addresses of units within said first agency

and said second agency.

20.   (Currently Amended) The method in claim 19, further comprising providing said first

agency and said second agency access to said global directory to obtain <u>said global</u> addresses of

units within said global directory.

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21.   (Original) The method in claim 17, further comprising producing a report of active units

in said first agency and said second agency.

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